THE MISEDUCATION OF CAMERON POST

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Based on the novel by
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EXT - HOLY ROSARY HOSPITAL - DAY

1993. A stone cross hangs at the top of an abandoned hospital, crumbling from age.

CAMERON, 16, athletic and striking follows close behind JAMIE, a lanky stoner- also 16. He breaks the chain locking the entrance with a bolt cutter.

INT - HOLY ROSARY HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

Jamie leads the way with a flashlight. They swig from a bottle of Dr. McGillicuddy's Peppermint Schnapps.

The place is creepy and dilapidated and perfect for breaking shit. They smash windows with abandoned equipment and race down the corridors in push carts, crashing hard.

They come across a metal ladder and climb through the hatch to a flat-topped roof.

EXT - ROOF - CONTINUOS

On the roof, Jamie spray paints CLASS OF '95. Cameron does a handstand. They throw broken chairs onto the weedy parking lot.

It's hot. Jamie's shirt comes off and Cameron ties hers around her waist, rolls up her sleeves.

Jamie sprays a silver streak down the wing of a pigeon.

CAMERON
Don't spray the pigeons.

JAMIE
Ok. I'll spray you.

CAMERON
Don't!

Cameron yells as he approaches her with the spray can. He knocks her down, onto her back. Her flesh hits the roof and the next thing she knows he's kissing her. She lets it happen.

Like all inexperienced kissers, they don't know what the fuck they're doing and are both searching for a rhythm that never synchs. They're kinda chewing at each other's faces.

She watches him. His eyes are closed. He pulls off her shirt.

Eyes closed, she tries to match his intensity, moving her hand across his back and in his hair, but once it's there she doesn't really know what to do. She rubs her fingers in. It's greasy.

Her skin presses into the melting tar. Far away she hears an ambulance. The clouds shift. Jamie's breathing crescendos until she sits up.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
I'm starving. Let's eat.

JAMIE
We're kinda already doing something.

She stands, slips on her shirt and does a few lunges to stretch out her legs.

CAMERON
We're gonna be late for bible study.

He stares at her, incredulous.

JAMIE
Completely fucking lame.

He gets up. Throws his shirt on.

JAMIE (CONT'D)
For a minute I was like, Holy shit, here we go. Cameron's actually into this.

CAMERON
Stop being such a little bitch. The roof's melting into my back.

JAMIE
Fine.

They climb down off the roof.

INT. CHURCH HALL - LATER

A group of twelve teens including Cameron and an angry Jamie sit with PASTOR CRAWFORD. Each kid holds an Extreme Teen Bible.

Next to Cameron sits COLEY, 16 & doe-eyed, emanating sweet naiveté.

COLEY
(nodding towards Jamie)
What's with him?

Cameron shrugs and leans into Coley's ear.

CAMERON
He's on his period.

PASTOR CRAWFORD
Ok, everyone. Eyes up here. It's time to get started.

Coley snorts with a quick burst of laughter and shuts herself up to focus on Pastor Crawford, who speaks as though he's preaching to a parish of thousands as oppose to 12 disinterested teens.

PASTOR CRAWFORD
So I was thinking- this morning when I was driving Justin and Chrissy to school. I was thinking about what it was like being your age. How I'd come to worship like I was ticking another task off the to-do list. I didn't get it like I do now. And I thought it might be good to let you guys in on a secret. Here's the thing: you know what we're trying to do every week in church? Us adults? Me, your parents, your teachers...?

He stalls to build suspense. His dramatic flare is painfully out of place in the context of the modest bible study room of disinterested teens.

PASTOR CRAWFORD (CONT'D)
We're trying to undo the things we did when we were your age.

BOOM. He waits for this truth bomb to land.

PASTOR CRAWFORD (CONT'D)
The things we did when we were your age. Think about it. You kids are our future, and you're at an age when you are ESPECIALLY vulnerable to evil. And when I say evil, I mean EVIL.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS OF MILES CITY - DAY

Cameron and Coley ride their bikes, laughing as they race.

PASTOR CRAWFORD (V.O.)
And you won't see it now, and you won't see it tomorrow, but what can FEEL like fun is actually the enemy. And that enemy is Closing The Noose. Around. Your. Neck.

INT. CAMERON'S HOUSE - DAY

Cameron and Coley enter the house.

CAMERON
GRANDMA? IS ANYBODY HOME?

No answer.

PASTOR CRAWFORD (V.O.)
And when the enemy yokes you early what it does is it takes control of your life and it destroys you.

INT. CAMERON'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cameron enters with Coley behind her. In one swift move, she closes the door and pulls Coley in by the waist. They've done this before. Coley pulls off Cameron's tank top. And then her own.

PASTOR CRAWFORD (O.S.)
And while you experiment and play with this yoke like it's a toy- you'll think "just this once, just a little longer" and then CLICK. It's got you.

They fall onto the bed and Coley moans quietly as the old bed creaks.

A white scar on Cameron's arm grabs Coley's attention. She reaches out and traces her finger along it.

COLEY
How'd you get that?

CAMERON
That's old. I was 8. I was riding on my dad's handlebars and I fell off.

Coley licks it.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
5 stitches.

Coley notices a small collage of photos on the nightstand. There's an old snapshot of a 10 year-old girl in the late 60s.

COLEY
Is that your mom?

CAMERON
Yeah.

COLEY
How old was she when she died?

Cameron thinks for a moment.

CAMERON
I'm actually not sure. I don't know. I was 12.

COLEY
Who's that?

In the collage is also a photo of a 12 year-old Cameron laughing hysterically with a girl, also 12.

CAMERON
Just this girl I used to be friends with. Irene. My grandma framed these when I was, like-
(she freezes)
Did you hear that?

COLEY
(concerned)
What?

CAMERON
Sorry I thought I heard something.

The door slowly creeks open. They throw on their clothes like the house is on fire. Then they see it's the cat sliding in through the door. Silence. They both look on the verge of tears.

Cameron starts to laugh.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
Thank fuck.

Cameron collapses on the bed and Coley takes a deep breath, trying to calm her heart.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Cameron gets her makeup done by RUTH, 42, prim and well manicured with an impenetrable “can-do” attitude. GRANDMA, late 60s, bakes cookies.

CAMERON
I feel like this is too much.

RUTH
If I use less it won’t last.

CAMERON
The dress is too short.

RUTH
You just need to get used to it.

The bell rings. Ruth goes to answer it.

RUTH (CONT’D)
I’ll get it.

CAMERON
(to Grandma)
You’d tell me if I was embarrassing myself, right?

GRANDMA
Your aunt knows what she’s doing. And I think you look good, kid.

CAMERON
I feel like an idiot.

GRANDMA
Yeah, but a good-looking idiot.

Ruth re-enters the room with Jamie, in head-to-toe black. Her hands cover his eyes.

RUTH
I present your prom date: Cameron Post.

JAMIE
Hey.

CAMERON
Hey.

Behind Jamie, Coley and her date BRETT appear. Coley takes Cameron’s breath away, making them both uncomfortable and self-conscious.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
I know I look stupid.

COLEY
No, it's nice.

Cameron looks for her eyes, but Coley looks away.

COLEY (CONT'D)
The makeup looks great. Did you do the makeup, Ruth?

RUTH
Yes, I did!

Coley and Ruth fall into easy banter while Cameron tries to distract herself with lipstick blotting.

EXT. CAMERON'S HOUSE - LATER

The two couples pose for photos as Ruth snaps away. Coley and Brett were made for this kind of bullshit, but next to them Jamie and Cameron stiff and don't know how to pose.

JAMIE
(whispering to Cam)
Nice tits.

CAMERON
You look like a used car salesman.

JAMIE
Good. That's what I was going for.

RUTH
Eyes to camera!

EXT. PARKING LOT - LATER

Brett's Chevy Bel Air is parked outside an empty college track parking lot. A single jogger in a teal running suit puffs through a lap. The girls shiver in their spaghetti straps. They pass a bottle of Jim Beam. Cameron and Jamie smoke weed out of a pipe.

CAMERON
Let's do the rest later.

COLEY
I want a hit.

BRETT
Really?

CAMERON
Since when do you smoke?

COLEY (CONT'D)
It's a special occasion.

CAMERON
Ok, so, when I light, take a breath in and hold it.

Cameron lights the pipe and Coley holds the smoke in. It makes her eyes water until she has a coughing fit. She passes the pipe to Brett who hesitates before taking a hit. He coughs too. They do another round.

Cameron watches Coley shiver in the wind. Holds herself back from wrapping her arms around her. Coley takes several deep breaths.

JAMIE
Are you feeling it?

BRETT
Can't tell.

COLEY
I never realized- I never breathe fully. Like, there's so much more lung room to breathe in than I give myself. Try breathing from your diaphragm. And pay attention.

CAMERON
Ok, I think you're good. Let's go.

COLEY
Wait! I have things!

Coley sprays them all with a tiny sample of perfume from her purse and hands out breath mints. Brett and Coley get into the car, but Jamie holds Cameron back.

JAMIE
I have something for you.

He hands her a corsage: a pink rose surrounded by baby's breath.

CAMERON
Whoa. Thanks.

JAMIE
They showed me how to put it on.

Jamie takes great pains to delicately pin the flower onto her dress.

JAMIE (CONT'D)
Sorry. Is it ok if I get a hole in the dress?

CAMERON
Yeah. I hate it. Fuck the dress.

JAMIE
Is the color ok? I wasn't sure what color to get.

CAMERON
No, it's good. Thanks.

JAMIE
You look beautiful.

CAMERON
NOT.

JAMIE
What?

CAMERON
Nothing. Forget it. Thanks

She leads the way into the car.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM - EVENING

Prom. Too much hair spray and eyeliner. Everybody's a bit sweaty and the whole thing already feels deflated. The theme is *Under the Stars*, with cardboard planets and stars dangling from the ceiling.

Boys and girls stand on separate sides of a large platform covered in glitter. When their names are called they come to the center to pose for photos. A video monitor projects their image on a screen hanging from a retracted basketball hoop.

The bleachers on opposite sides of the gym are filled with relatives and classmates cheering.

Cameron struggles to walk in her modest heels when her name is called. Ruth snaps photos from the bleachers.

Coley and Brett are up next. Cameron watches them pose.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM - LATER

Mr. Big's "To Be with You" plays as all the couples sway side to side in the stiff Frankenstein way high school couples slow dance.

Parents weave through the couples to get photos. Ruth and JAMIE'S MOM stay close to Cameron and Jamie.

The song comes to an end and a fast one comes on.

DJ
Ok, moms and dads, it's time to go so we can get this party started!

Ruth hugs Cameron goodbye.

RUTH
(with tears in her eyes)
I'm so proud of you, honey. Be safe and have a magical night, okay?

CAMERON
You know those stars are made of cardboard, right?

RUTH
Okay, Ms. Comedian. I'll see you at home.

Ruth leaves with all the parents. Girls take off their heels and people start dancing fast and loose.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM - LATER

Brett and Jamie are posing for photos- jackets slung over shoulders as they stare the camera down with a few other boys. The pics will make sweet-ass B&W prints for the yearbook.

"November Rain" plays as Cameron and Coley dance, both high and giddy. Coley sings along. She doesn't know all the lyrics.

COLEY
(singing)
Dancing like a feather, cause we both like mayonnaise.

Cameron's a dopey idiot in the palm of her hand. Coley checks that the coast is clear and pulls her off the dance floor.

INT. BRETT’S CHEVY BEL AIR - NIGHT

Cameron and Coley smoke weed in the backseat. Coley, feeling stoned and ballsy, kisses her.

COLEY
I want to try something.

CAMERON
What?

Coley reaches her hand under Cameron’s dress. Cameron’s breath gets caught in her throat. It’s the most intimate moment they’ve shared. Coley straddles her and Cameron’s back against the door. In and out, they breathe together, their cheeks pressed against each other. Eyelashes touching. The door opens and they spill out.

Cameron lies face up staring straight at Jamie, who looks down at her in shock.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. LIVINGROOM - DAY

No audio. Ruth, Grandma and Pastor Crawford are mid-discussion. Cameron spies from the kitchen.

INT. FORD BRONCO - DAY

Ruth and Cameron drive down an empty road in Western Montana. The sky and mountains are so beautiful they look painted on. Cameron’s angry mournful eyes are glued to the window.

EXT. GIT ‘N’ SPLIT - LATER

Ruth offers Cameron a tube of Pringles as they walk to the car.

CAMERON
I hate sour cream and onion. All lesbians do.

RUTH
That’s not funny.

EXT. GOD’S PROMISE - DAY

The car pulls up a dirt road to a large compound with vast green fields, a densely wooded forest and streams.

At the center lies the main building, which resembles an Aspen lodge.

As the car pulls into the parking lot, JANE FONDA, 17, an off-the-land type with a prosthetic right leg approaches carrying a Polaroid camera.

Ruth opens the car door and FLASH goes the camera. She and Cameron exit the car.

JANE
Hey!

RUTH
Hello. We're here to see Reverend Rick.

JANE
He's giving a sermon, I'll take you in. I'm Jane Fonda.

Ruth begins unloading the trunk, focusing her energy on pretending the fake leg isn't deeply disturbing to her.

CAMERON
Seriously? Jane Fonda?

JANE
I'm always serious.
(deadpan)
Just kidding.

Jane grabs two bags and leads them into the main building. She's a fast walker with surprising grace considering her limp.

CAMERON
I'm Cameron.

JANE
I know.

Cameron and Ruth have to rush to keep up.

INT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The inside of the building has none of the charm of its exterior: industrial laminated floors, very few windows and fluorescent lights. A male voice can be heard singing Christian rock. "Love Song for a Savior" by Jars of Clay.

RICK (O.S.)
(singing)
It seems too easy to call you Savior. Not close enough to call you God.

INT - CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS

REVEREND RICK (38) kind-eyed and charming sits on a small stage. He performs with the easy boy next door swagger of a teen heartthrob. There's an audience of 14 teens seated before him. They wear uniforms: plaid pinafores for the girls and plaid trousers with crisp white shirts for the boys.

Cameron examines Rick and the kids. Too much sincerity. HELEN (16, broad, sturdy and unfeminine) joins in singing and some others join in too. A few hands go up, raised to god.

RICK (CONT'D)
(singing)
So as I sit and think of words I can mention, to show my devotion, I want to fall in love with you. My heart beats with devotion for you.

Rick notices Cameron, Ruth and Jane standing at the door when the song comes to an end. He gives Cameron a quick smile and wink. The audience claps enthusiastically.

RICK (CONT'D)
Okay guys, we're up. See you at dinner.

Rick jumps off the stage and goes to greet Ruth and Cameron with hugs.

RICK (CONT'D)
Ruth, so nice to meet you in person. Cameron, welcome!

As Rick speaks with Ruth the students pile out while rubbernecking the new girl. The only one who goes for it is ERIN, 16, bursting with love and enthusiasm. She hugs Cameron with so much vigor they almost topple over.

ERIN
You're here!

CAMERON
Hey.

ERIN
I'm Erin. We're sharing a room. I'm so excited!
(MORE)

ERIN (CONT'D)
I've been hoping for a roommate all year. Seriously. You have no idea.

CAMERON
Cool.

Rick guides them all out.

RICK
Let's go get you settled in.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Rick and Ruth walk ahead, laughing like old friends.

ERIN
Are you an only child?

CAMERON
Yeah.

ERIN
I have a sister and I find that having another girl my age close by can be a real source of comfort.

CAMERON
Cool.

Cameron has no idea how to handle this girl.

INT. ERIN AND CAMERON'S ROOM - LATER

Half of the room is done up in yellow and purple: yellow pillows, purple bedspread, yellow and purple striped frame with a collage of snapshots, Christian concert tickets and handwritten Bible quotes.

Cameron takes in all that is "Erin" with mild terror. She holds a contract in her hand.

Rick stands with Cameron's bags splayed open on her bed, mid-search.

RICK
Erin's a big Vikings fan, aren't you?

ERIN
You know it! Don't worry, you'll get decorating privileges soon.

CAMERON
Cool.

ERIN
Cause when you get here you can't put anything up on your walls except your iceberg.

RICK
You have to earn certain privileges at God's Promise. I swear, it's not that bad, just decorating and mail. Most disciples get there in a few weeks. It's all spelt out in the contract.

ERIN
Maybe you'll become a Vikings fan in the meantime! Who's your favorite team?

CAMERON
I don't have one.

Erin's never met someone who doesn't have a favorite team. Rick keeps scanning the contents of a large suitcase- everything checks out.

RICK
I'm impressed. It's pretty rare I don't manage to-

He comes across something.

RICK (CONT'D)
Spoke too soon!

Rick pulls out a cassette tape. It's The Breeders' POD.

RICK (CONT'D)
I'm guessing The...
(he re-reads the name of the band)
Breeders are not singing in praise of the lord?

Cameron shakes her head no and he hands the tape to Ruth who handles it like narcotics.

RUTH
(to Cameron)
Where did you get this?

CAMERON
Columbia House.

Rick's closes the suitcase.

RICK
I'm done here. Did you take a look at the contract?

Cameron nods.

RICK (CONT'D)
All that's left is your signature and we're good to go.

It's like signing her own death warrant.

RUTH
I think you're going to do really well here, Cammie.

Cameron doesn't respond. She signs. Avoids eye contact when confronted with all their smiling faces.

RICK
Perfect. Now you're officially a disciple of God's Promise: welcome!

Erin gives a quick clap and then silence hangs in the air.

RICK (CONT'D)
(to Ruth)
I'm sure you have a long drive ahead of you.

RUTH
I do.

RICK
Cameron, why don't you walk your aunt to her car?

RUTH
Thank you so much, Rick.
(She grasps both his hands in hers)
It brings me so much comfort knowing Cammie's in good hands.

Cameron watches, trying to suppress her mounting panic.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Ruth and Cameron approach the car. Ruth hugs her tight.

CAMERON
You can't leave me here.

Ruth holds Cameron at arm's length and looks her in the eyes.

RUTH
I know you can't see it now, but not bringing you here would be a terrible thing to do.

CAMERON
Ruth. Please. I'm not like those people. There's something wrong with that girl.

RUTH
I think she's sweet.

CAMERON
I don't need to be here. I didn't do anything, I swear!

Ruth steels herself.

RUTH
No. I won't give up on you. I have an obligation to your parents.

CAMERON
Don't talk about my parents. My parents would never send me to a place like this.

RUTH
You don't know everything there is to know about your mom and dad and what they'd want for you.

Cameron takes a moment. Stares Ruth down.

CAMERON
Did you ever think that maybe it was *you* that made me this way? Like, I would have been fine, but then every single choice you've made since they died was the wrong one?

Tears form in Ruth's eyes. She tries to speak, but can't. She walks to the car, gets in and drives off. Cameron watches, stoic and full of self-hatred.

INSERT: SCENE FROM *THE HUNGER* PLAYS ON TV

A scene from the film THE HUNGER: Susan Sarandon watches Catherine Deneuve play the piano. Sarandon spills her wine down her white t-shirt.

COLEY (O.S.)
I knew it.

INT. COLEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Cameron sits next to Coley.

CAMERON
What? It's a vampire movie - I thought it would be scary!

COLEY
Leave it to you to pick the vampire movie with a wet T-shirt contest.

CAMERON
I didn't know that was gonna happen.

COLEY
Yes, you did.

CAMERON
No, I didn't!

Back and forth they shove each other until Cameron grabs onto Coley's hand and holds it. Coley tries to pull it out of her grasp, but isn't strong enough. They lock eyes. Cameron leans in and kisses her.

And once they're kissing there's no stopping. The air conditioner hums. The movie keeps playing. Cameron grazes Coley's skin with her lips.

COLEY
Oh my God.

Cameron kisses her way down to the waistband of her shorts. She slips a finger under the band and feels the skin just beneath.

CAMERON
Tell me when to stop.

Cameron undoes the button when a BRIGHT LIGHT shines ahead, blinding her. She looks up.

INT. CAMERON & ERIN'S ROOM - EVENING

KEVIN, 22, a local college student who acts as the evening security guard, holds a flashlight and looks directly at Cameron, who sits up, startled. They hold eye contact for a second until he turns the light on Erin, who's asleep in her bed. Then he's gone.

Cameron lies back - her heart pounding. She listens to the light wheeze of Erin's breath.

INT. DINING HALL - MORNING

Erin and Cameron sit across from one another, eating breakfast. They're both in uniform. Cameron looks around the room - around 15 kids total, sitting in their cliques. She spots Jane sitting with a boy, ADAM, 16, Native American and intimidatingly beautiful.

ERIN
That girl's name is Jane Fonda. Like, her actual name. Either that or she's lying.
(beat)
She could be lying.

CAMERON
Who's the guy?

ERIN
That's Adam.
(beat)
I think if getting better is your top priority then that has to be true of the people you surround yourself with, you know?

CAMERON
Yeah.
(beat)
Are you... getting better?

ERIN
Of course.

Cameron tries to read her eyes for the truth.

ERIN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
(Like she's competing for Miss America)
I've been brought closer to God and I can feel Him guiding me. Before, it was like I was the ball in a pinball machine, being bounced back and forth. Now I have tools. And support.
(pointing at the line)
Like, Helen's a good friend of mine and we're positive influences on each other. That's her, by the milk.

Erin waves at Helen, who waves back.

ERIN (CONT'D)
It's a shame she's so... well, she's kinda butch, right? I know that's a mean word but I mean it factually, like not in a mean way. You're lucky. You have a really feminine figure.

CAMERON
Thanks.

Erin nods to two girls eating together, LINDSAY and GRACE.

ERIN
Like, Grace and Lindsay I avoid because they have an unhealthy attachment to each other.
(whispering)
They were both molested.

Cameron nods.

ERIN (CONT'D)
Mark's really cool. Don't look but he's at my 10 o'clock. 8 o'clock.

Cameron subtly looks over at MARK, 17, serious with elfin features and pouty Hummel-figurine lips.

ERIN (CONT'D)
He has a really nice singing voice and - I'm being so obvious. You have to promise not to tell anyone, but I have the biggest crush on him.

Cameron examines her for a moment.

CAMERON
My lips are sealed.

At the table next to them sits a group of teen boys: DANE, STEVE and IAN.

ERIN
That guy on the far left? That's Dane. He was a full on drug addict. Like, he used to *prostitute* himself for drugs.

CAMERON
Holy shit.

Erin winces slightly at her choice of words.

ERIN
But then he got saved and brought to God's Promise by Lakewood in Houston.

CAMERON
What's that?

ERIN
You've never heard of Lakewood? It's a mega-church, like bigger than a pro-basketball arena. Thousands worship there.

Rick walks by them and winks at Cameron as he approaches BETHANY, 33, proper. He takes the seat across from her.

ERIN (CONT'D)
Rick's such an inspiration. Do you know he used to struggle with same sex attractions?

This sparks Cameron's interest.

CAMERON
Seriously?

ERIN
Yeah, and he's been in recovery for years and now he and Bethany are boyfriend/girlfriend. How cute is that?

Cameron considers this for a moment.

CAMERON
I think they both could do better.

ERIN
Totally. Wait, what?

CAMERON
Nothing.

Cameron watches Adam as he butters his toast and cuts off the crusts meticulously. He notices Cameron watching him and licks his lips lasciviously. She looks away, embarrassed.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The room consists of 5 small tables surrounded by plastic chairs and a large whiteboard up front.

The students stare up at Cameron, who stands at the head of the room next to Bethany.

CAMERON
Hi, I'm Cameron.

Silence.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
And I'm an alcoholic.

She looks around to see the room is genuinely confused.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
Just kidding. I'm sixteen. From Miles City.

BETHANY
Anything else?

CAMERON
Um... I guess I always felt different from other people, and earlier this year I-

BETHANY
Cameron, this is Math class.

CAMERON
Oh.

BETHANY
You can save that kind of thing for Group.

CAMERON
Of course. Right.

Cameron, humiliated, sits down next to Erin as the room erupts into chatter and laughter. Bethany has to raise her voice to be heard.

BETHANY
I only want to have to ask you once to take out your materials and get to work.

Most of the room ignores her. She approaches Cameron.

BETHANY (CONT'D)
Honey, what grade were you about to enter at school?

CAMERON
11th.

BETHANY
Oh great, I think we have that one...

Bethany goes to a nearby shelf to locate a book.

BETHANY (CONT'D)
Sometimes we have too many students at the same grade level. It's good because they can be study buddies, but then we have to order new books and they can take a while to arrive.

She finds the book she's looking for.

BETHANY (CONT'D)
Here we go!

She delivers it to Cameron.

The room goes completely silent and Cameron looks up to see DR. LYDIA MARCH, 55, standing at the door.

Intimidating doesn't do her justice. Stern and elegant, with a face that vacillates between stunning and grotesque dependig on her mood.

LYDIA
I apologize for the interruption Ms. Erikson. I've come to meet our new disciple.

Lydia approaches Cameron and shakes her hand.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
Welcome, Cameron. I'm Dr. Lydia March. I'm the director of God's Promise.

CAMERON
Hi.

LYDIA
It's a pleasure to meet you. I know the adjustment can be difficult at first, but I expect you'll find yourself at home here soon. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to ask if you need anything.

CAMERON
Ok.

LYDIA
You should consider yourself amongst family here, Cameron.

CAMERON
You can call me Cam.

LYDIA
No. Cameron's already a masculine name. Abbreviating it to something even less feminine only exacerbates your gender confusion.

Cameron nods.

CAMERON
Got it.

LYDIA
I'm glad we're on the same page.

Lydia notices Adam's hair and it stops her mid-speech. She eyes Bethany's desk and approaches it, taking a rubber band off a rubber band ball. Then she heads for Adam and ties his hair back, handling him like a dog.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
Adam, I've told you to get this hair out of your eyes. There's no hiding from God.
(to Bethany)
Carry on.

With that, Lydia exits. You can feel the room exhale.

EXT. GOD’S PROMISE - LATER

Cameron runs fast around the border of the property. She stops, completely out of breath. Hears some laughter coming from the direction of the barn and follows it.

She looks into the barn from a crack in the slats of wood. Inside, she can see Jane and Adam smoking a joint as they talk. She stands watching.

INT. CAMERON & ERIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Cameron lies awake in bed while Erin snores. The light flashes on her face as Kevin checks in on them.

He leaves and the room goes dark.

INT. LYDIA’S OFFICE - DAY

Cameron sits across from Lydia and Rick, staring at a piece of paper with a drawing of an iceberg and “CAMERON’S SAME SEX ATTRACTION DISORDER”. Facing the iceberg is a ship with “FAMILY, FRIENDS, SOCIETY” written above.

RICK
Would you say that the tip of the iceberg looks scary to the people on the boat?

CAMERON
Yes.

RICK
It’s all the people on the ship wanna focus on, but we know it’s not the real problem, is it?

CAMERON
No.

Rick gives her a warm, inviting smile.

RICK
The same is true when it comes to your same sex attractions. The sin is so overwhelming that you become fixated on it, when in actuality, the problems we need to address are below the surface.

Cameron watches Rick’s thick hands gesticulate as he speaks.

RICK (CONT'D)
The attractions are a symptom of a larger problem, and we're going to spend our time together like detectives, investigating what in your past lead you to these particular desires.

Cameron nods. Silence.

RICK (CONT'D)
I know we're throwing a lot at you. How are you feeling?

CAMERON
Good. I'm good. Learning. I never thought of... homosexuality like that.

Lydia pounces at the word, "homosexuality".

LYDIA
There is no such thing as homosexuality. There's only the same struggle with sin we all face. Would you let drug addicts throw parades for themselves?

Cameron looks to Rick. Is this bitch for real? He smiles.

CAMERON
No.

LYDIA
Sin is sin. Your struggle is with the sin of same-sex attraction.

RICK
We're here to support you. I've been right where you are, so I know how you feel.

Lydia places a hand over Cameron's, sliding from cold to intimate.

LYDIA
I'd like for you to see us as your allies.

CAMERON
Thank you.

RICK
We both have so much faith in you.

Cameron eyes them both, suspicious.

INT. CAMERON & ERIN'S ROOM - DAY

Cameron dumps her bag on the bed. She notices Erin's iceberg, taped to her side of the wall. She looks around to make sure the coast is clear. She reads, "*Too much masculine bonding with Dad over football.*"

ERIN (V.O.)
Too much masculine bonding with Dad over football.

MONTAGE- VARIOUS

-Erin and her Dad (wearing plastic Viking hats and purple/ yellow face paint), stand and cheer as they watch the Vikings score a touchdown on TV in their livingroom. Their faces are painted purple and yellow and they wear plastic Viking hats.

-Erin's hot sister waves to the crowd as she's crowned homecoming queen.

ERIN (V.O.)
Jennifer's extreme beauty resulting in feelings of feminine inadequacy.

-13 year-old Erin helps herself to a drink at the water fountain. A boy runs up to her and quickly cops a feel, then runs off laughing.

ERIN (V.O.)
Unresolved sexual trauma from seventh-grade dance when Oren Burstock grabbed my breast.

-Helen gets her school photo taken. Below the photo reads: HELEN SHOWALTER

-Helen hits a home run.

HELEN (V.O.)
Emphasis on athletic achievement and masculinity reinforced by softball obsession.

-Helen comes out of a dressing room defeated in pants that don't zip up.

HELEN (V.O.)
Bad body image.

-Mark gets his school photo taken. Below the photo reads: MARK TURNER

-Mark watches as his stern father (a preacher) prepare a sermon at the pulpit.

MARK (V.O.)
Lack of physical affection from father.

-A male camp counselor shows Mark how to hold a bow and arrow during archery.

MARK (V.O.)
Infatuation with senior counselor at Son Light's Summer Camp...

-Adam gets his school photo taken. Below the photo reads: ADAM RED EAGLE

-Adam and his mother at a Lakota healing ceremony.

ADAM
Yanktonais' beliefs conflicting with the Bible.

-Adam and his mother cook together.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Too much bonding with mom over feminine activities.

-Jane gets her school photo taken. Below the photo reads: JANE FONDA

-5 year-old Jane watches her mother make out with two different men at once.

JANE (V.O.)
Lack of stable and singular masculine role model at commune.

-Jane and two butch lesbians pilfer through dry marijuana leaves in a kitchen.

JANE (V.O.)
Early exposure to illegal drugs and-
What are you doing?

END OF MONTAGE

INT. JANE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jane has walked in on Cameron staring at her iceberg.

CAMERON
I'm sorry. I was just..

JANE
What?

CAMERON
Reading your iceberg.

Jane laughs.

JANE
It's cool. Everyone does it.

Jane sits on the bed, Cameron relaxes.

JANE (CONT'D)
Have you done yours?

CAMERON
Not yet.

JANE
You run, right?

CAMERON
Yeah.

JANE
Just write about how positive reinforcement for sports messed with your gender identity. They love that shit. And your parents not giving you enough physical affection. Or too much physical affection. Whichever it was, that's why you're gay.

CAMERON
My parents are dead.

JANE
Oh. Sorry.
(beat)
That should probably go on your iceberg.

CAMERON
You were raised in a commune?

JANE
Yeah.

CAMERON
I didn't know hippies were evangelical.

JANE
They're not. My mom's new husband is.

The conversation is over. Jane pulls out some homework.

CAMERON
One last question.

JANE
(without looking up)
I was in a car accident.

CAMERON
I was going to ask where you get your weed.

This gets her attention.

JANE
I beg your pardon?

CAMERON
I saw you and Adam in the barn.

Jane eyes her for a moment. She decides she's probably trust worthy, or at the very least harmless.

JANE
I grow it myself. It's ditch weed and the early frost is killing most of the crop. Adam and I are gonna pick as much as we can Thursday during study period.

Jane turns back to her homework.

CAMERON
You don't look like the kind of person who would be here.

JANE
Because I'm such a dick magnet?

CAMERON
Because you don't seem to believe in it.

JANE
I didn't have a choice. Did you?

CAMERON
No.

And with that, Cameron leaves Jane to her work.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

Lydia and 7 disciples (including Cameron, but not Adam or Jane) stand in a circle, holding hands. All eyes are closed except for Cameron, who tries to follow, but has no idea what's going on.

HELEN
I will not pray for God to change me because God does not make mistakes and I am the person who-

Everyone opens their eyes and looks at Helen, who wipes her sweaty palms onto her pants before resuming hand-holding.

LYDIA
Again.

HELEN
I will not pray for God to change me because God does not make mistakes and I am the *one* who is tempted by sin. Change will come through God, but within me. I must be the change.

She did it. She exhales. Everyone says the last line together. Cameron tries to mouth along, but isn't very convincing. The overall effect of them all chanting together is creepy and off-putting.

EVERYONE
The opposite of the sin of homosexuality is not heterosexuality: it is Holiness.

They sit down. Lydia looks around the room.

LYDIA
Let's welcome Cameron to the group.

Everyone says hello in their polite quiet voices.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
How are you finding God's Promise, Cameron?

CAMERON
Good.

Silence.

LYDIA
I hope you use this time as an opportunity to examine the way you respond to discomfort.

Cameron takes this in with a nod. Lydia changes course.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
Who would like to get us started?

Complete silence. Lydia isn't phased by this. Helen's deeply uncomfortable with the silence. She looks around, her leg tapping with nervous jitters.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
Steve.

Steve perks up.

STEVE
Ok. Um. I'm ok.
(he takes a moment to gather his courage)
Recently I've been struggling with my urges. And, like, duh- we all are so no big deal.

LYDIA
Be specific. What urges?

Steve takes a moment to gather his courage.

STEVE
Ok. So, I always knew I didn't want to act on my same sex attractions, so in the past I turned to self-pleasure, but once I learned that's also a sin I stopped. But it's like, shouldn't it be ok if it's instead of acting out?

Dane rolls his eyes, Steve clocks it.

STEVE (CONT'D)
(to Dane)
What?

DANE
You can't get a pass from God to jerk off.

Helen's eye's bulge at "jerk off."

STEVE
(livid)
Who asked you?

LYDIA
What are you experiencing, Steve?

STEVE
I'm experiencing... irritation.

LYDIA
Why are you irritated?

STEVE
It's like he think he's better than everyone.

Lydia stays back and lets the argument unfold.

HELEN
I feel it too. I sometimes wonder if Dane's opened his heart to God. Like, look at his body language.

Dane is closed off, with his arms crossed. Cameron notices she's sitting the exact same way and uncrosses.

DANE
Steve's projecting his masculine insecurities onto me. And Helen needs to have an opinion on everything.

HELEN
That's not true!

LYDIA
Dane brings up some interesting points.

HELEN
(changing gears)
You think so?

STEVE
It’s like he can’t do anything wrong because of his past!

DANE
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT.

Dane’s anger is terrifying to everyone but Lydia and Mark. The room goes silent.

MARK
(gentle)
Then tell us.

DANE
No. You don’t get to tell your reverend later abut how you met a junkie in treatment. I’m not like you and I’m glad I’m not like you.
(to Cameron)
I don’t even know you, but one look and I can tell you’re a dyke.

Taken off-guard, Cameron bursts into a brief snort of laughter.

LYDIA
Dane. This instinct of yours, to set yourself apart from everyone else and punish them for not having experienced the kind of trauma you have. Who does it remind you of?

Cameron starts to pull off her sweater.

LYDIA (CONT’D)
Stop that right now.

Cameron stops with her sweater mid-way up her shirt.

CAMERON
What?

LYDIA
It’s not appropriate to undress in public.

CAMERON
(pulling the sweater down)
I have a shirt on underneath.

LYDIA
If you'd like to remove an article of clothing, then you ask to be excused so you may do so in private.

CAMERON
Sorry.

LYDIA
(to Dane)
Dane. Who do you know who punishes you for his past?

DANE
(barely audible)
My father

LYDIA
I can't hear you.

DANE
My father.

LYDIA
Yes. Me too.

Cameron looks around to see if anyone else thinks this shit is insane. They all watch Lydia attentively, hanging on her every word.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Cameron exits group therapy a bit shell-shocked. Rick walks past, and smiles.

RICK
Hey! How's it going?

CAMERON
Ok.

Rick examines her face for a moment.

RICK
Follow me.

EXT. PATIO - LATER

Cameron and Rick play ping-pong on a table that's seen better days. Rick's pretty good- Cameron struggles to keep up.

CAMERON
Can I ask a question?

RICK
Shoot.

CAMERON
Are you and Bethany a couple?

RICK
Jeez, you kids like to gossip.

Cameron misses the ball. She picks it up and serves.

CAMERON
So, yes.

RICK
No comment.

CAMERON
So this worked for you? You changed?

Rick considers this.

RICK
Yes. I changed.

Silence as they play.

RICK (CONT'D)
It was a process. I had to *want* to get on track with God's plan for me.
(he takes a moment to consider this)
It's funny, actually, the moment things began to turn around was in a bar. A gay bar. Of all places.

Cameron raises an eyebrow.

RICK (CONT'D)
Two men from my church came in. They saw my car parked outside and they knew I'd been struggling, so they came in looking for me.

CAMERON
Wow. What a coincidence.

RICK
It was God, Cameron. I asked for His help and He gave it to me in the form of those allies. And I thought to myself, 'if God can come to the dirtiest place in the world, I better listen.'

They keep playing until Rick grabs the ball mid-volley and looks Cameron straight in the eye.

RICK (CONT'D)
I was unhappy. Deeply unhappy, but I didn't think I was worth saving. I wonder if you've asked that of yourself: are you worth saving?

Cameron shrugs and avoids his eyes. Rick serves.

INT. CAMERON & ERIN'S ROOM - DAY

Erin does homework on her side of the room as Cameron sits at her desk working furiously on a sheet of paper that says CAMERON POST LOVES COLEY TAYLOR. But all the letters "L" "O" "V" and "E" in their names are crossed out below is a list of numbers she's calculating. She adds the digits by two and keeps going to figure out their love percentage.

ERIN (O.S.)
How's your iceberg coming?

Cameron turns over her paper and goes to her iceberg. There's only one sentence written in: *TOO MUCH POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT FOR SPORTS.*

CAMERON
Good. Slow.

Erin approaches and looks over Cam's shoulder to read.

ERIN
Oh cool. You have gender confusion because of sports too. We have so much in common.

CAMERON
Cool.

Cameron tries to go back to work but it's too boring.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
Why do they let you decorate with the Vikings stuff if it's such a problem for you?

This takes Erin off guard. She gathers her thoughts.

ERIN
I have to learn to appreciate football in a healthy way. Like, there's nothing wrong with being a woman who's a fan of football, but I can't look to my football bond with my father to confirm my sense of self.

CAMERON
Yeah.

ERIN
Because that confirmation confuses my gender identity.

CAMERON
Makes sense.

Cameron looks out the window and spots Jane and Adam exiting the building.

ERIN
Wanna watch The NeverEnding Story during free period? Helen's making popcorn.

CAMERON
I actually told Jane I'd go on a hike with her today.

ERIN
Oh. Fun. Maybe next time.

CAMERON
Yeah, definitely next time.

Cameron grabs a sweater and runs out the door.

EXT. GOD'S PROMISE - DAY

Cameron runs to catch up to Jane and Adam who are walking towards the woods right outside the property.

CAMERON
Hold up! Jane!

They stop and wait for Cameron. Adam gives Jane a look.

JANE
Just in time.

ADAM
It’s a really intense hike. Your shoes don’t look right for it.

JANE
Don’t be paranoid. She’s fine.

Adam’s annoyed, but Jane ignores him and snaps a quick Polaroid of him and Cameron.

ADAM
A warning would be nice.

JANE
Posing for photos is dishonest.

Jane removes the photo from the lip of the camera and shoves it in her back pocket as she leads them all into the forest.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

The sunshine is distilled through branches and leaves. Jane’s prosthetic leg squeaks with each step, marking the passage of time like a metronome.

JANE
It’s just over there, beyond the stream.

ADAM
Beyond The Stream: go!

Jane thinks for a moment, then launches into her pitch.

JANE
Alyssa Milano stars in *BEYOND THE STREAM*, the story of a young woman, who’s caught up in the high stakes world of competitive fishing
(she thinks)
...when a rare fish preservation activist played by... the guy who stole Kelly from Zack on Saved By The Bell. He enters her life and shows her that winning hearts is more fun than winning trophies.

ADAM
Wait, no- I have it!

JANE
You're not going to beat competitive fishing.

ADAM
Girls just wanna have fun in this teen comedy about a clique where they... haze girls who haven't gotten their periods yet.
(he struggles to keep it together)
Until the queen bee gets pregnant and discovers the meaning of life, dot dot dot, *BEYOND THE STREAM*.

JANE
How would they be able to tell if they got their periods?

ADAM
(shrugging)
Movie magic. Maybe they go from black and white to technicolor like in the Wizard of Oz.

JANE
The game is you choose the title and I give the story- you can't give both.

ADAM
Two can play this game, my dear.

JANE
Yeah but it's not the same challenge for you if you give the title too. It's either-

CAMERON
In *TOUCAN PLAY THIS GAME*, Billy Crystal voices an animated toucan with a gambling problem. He's got debts to pay and with the help of a sassy flamingo nightclub singer (Michelle Pfeiffer) he gets to work on the perfect crime: robbing the casino he owes.

Jane and Adam look at each other in surprise.

ADAM
Well played, Post.

Cameron has never felt more proud of herself.

EXT. WEED PATCH - LATER

There's a patch of clear land with exposure to direct sunlight; this is where Jane has been growing her weed: tall green shrubs lined up in neat rows. The three of them pick leaves off the stems and place them in brown paper bags.

ADAM
It's like having your own Disney villain, only this one won't let you jerk off.

JANE
I find her incredibly attractive.

ADAM
Sex with Lydia would be like fucking the mom from Carrie.

JANE
Cameron. Lydia: hot or not?

CAMERON
No comment.
(she considers this)
What's her deal? Like, I get why Rick's here, but why does she give a shit? She not, like, ex-gay, right?

ADAM
Oh god no.

JANE
She's Rick's aunt.

CAMERON
Seriously?

JANE
She de-gayed him. Like, before she was just a regular therapist, but then he was her human guinea pig.

ADAM
I bet she gives, like, wool socks for Christmas.

JANE
I'd be extremely happy with wool socks as a gift.

ADAM
Of course you would.

CAMERON
My grandma would love wool socks as a gift.

ADAM
Old people taste and lesbian taste run parallel.

Cameron considers this.

CAMERON
How long have you guys been here?

JANE
I started last summer. Adam came Spring semester.

CAMERON
Do you still see yourselves as, like... gay?

JANE
(to Adam)
Don't answer that.
(to Cameron)
You read our icebergs, but you remain an enigma. Who is Cameron Post? How'd you get here? Were you caught or did they just smell the SSA?

ADAM
Leave her alone.
(to Cameron)
You don't have to answer that if you don't want.

CAMERON
What's SSA?

ADAM
Same sex attraction.

JANE
Like with Mark you can tell just looking at him.
(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)
I’m pretty sure Erin turned herself in and Helen probably thought she was going to softball camp.

ADAM
It’s none of our business.

JANE
Of course it’s our business!

CAMERON
My boyfriend walked in on me and this girl, Coley.

ADAM
Oh shit.

JANE
Where’d they send her?

CAMERON
Nowhere.

ADAM
That’s fucked up.

CAMERON
It was a fucked up situation.

Jane examines Cameron.

JANE
You should forget about her.

CAMERON
Why?
(beat)
Who says I haven’t?

JANE
The world only stopped for you, not her. You might as well be dead.

CAMERON
(defensive)
What happened happened to both of us.

Silence.

ADAM
I’m sure you’ll work it out when you get out of here.
(pause)
(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)
I know that sounded sarcastic, but it’s not. This is my genuine voice.

They go back to picking weed in silence.

EXT. WEED PATCH - LATER

The three of them sit by the trunk of a Douglas Fir near the edge of the patch snacking on beef jerky and apple juice.

Jane goes to work messing with the straps and buckles on her leg. Cameron tries to avoid staring at her stump, which is covered with padding. Jane detaches part of the prosthetic leg, pulls out a lighter, pipe and baggy of marijuana from a hollowed out compartment inside. Then she snaps the leg back into place.

JANE
(to Cameron)
You’ll get used to it.

Jane packs the pipe, takes a hit, and passes to Cameron. They smoke in silence for a round.

CAMERON
Adam, what does Winkte mean?

ADAM
Why do you ask?

CAMERON
Sorry. Forget it. I just saw it on your iceberg.

ADAM
It means I’m two spirit.

Cameron raises an eyebrow as she takes a hit.

ADAM (CONT’D)
It’s like a third gender.

CAMERON
Like... transsexual?

ADAM
No. It’s hard to explain...
(he thinks)
Ok, so the medicine wheel represents men on one side and women on the other, but there’s a space in between that’s for two spirits. We complete the circle.

JANE
Basically he's the Native American David Bowie.

They all consider this for a moment.

ADAM
I'll take it.

CAMERON
Why did your parents send you here if you're two spirit and it's a Native thing?

JANE
His dad got into politics and converted to Christianity. To sway votes.

ADAM
Having a fag son kinda fucks his image.

Heavy silence as Adam looks on the verge of tears. Jane kisses him.

CAMERON
Did Rick ever tell you the story of how he was saved?

Adam and Jane burst into laughter.

JANE
You mean how Christian allies happened upon his car in the parking lot of a gay bar and came in to "investigate"?

ADAM
I can totally picture it: they're all staring at each other like, "fuuuuuck" and it's this weird stand-down and finally Rick's like, "ohmygod- did you guys come here *to save me*?!"

JANE
(laughing)
And they're like,
(her voice goes up an octave)
"...uhhh, yeah. We were driving and we saw your car."

CAMERON
You drive aaaa....bluuu (she searches his face for an answer)

ADAM
(playing Rick)
“Grey Toyota Camry- yes!”

JANE
“Of course, yeah, we saw it! And we thought, like, ‘Rick really needs our help finding God” and that’s why we’re here.’”

Adam laughs so hard he snorts apple juice out of his nose.

INT. LYDIA OFFICE - DAY

Lydia reviews Cameron’s iceberg as Cameron watches, nervous.

LYDIA
You write that the positive reinforcement you received for your athleticism confused your gender identity.

CAMERON
Yes.

LYDIA
Expand on that.

CAMERON
...I don’t know.

LYDIA
You must have had a reason to put this on your iceberg.

CAMERON
Just, I was encouraged to compete. I did track. I was state ranked. The whole family would come see me race.

LYDIA
And that’s how you earned their love.

CAMERON
Not exactly. Like, I knew winning would make them proud.

Lydia nods and takes notes.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
But I don't think I was doing it to earn love or something. They weren't like that.

LYDIA
You continued competing after they passed.

CAMERON
Yes.

LYDIA
You kept them alive this way. I'm aware that you continue to train.

CAMERON
I'm not training, I sometimes run but-

LYDIA
It's clear you use your athletic abilities as a crutch to keep yourself from facing their death. I'm going to require that you cease training.

CAMERON
But it's not- I think running is actually good. For my head.

LYDIA
Cameron. Can we both agree that your gender identity is faulty?

CAMERON
Ok.

LYDIA
Typically, this is a reaction to a failure to bond with your same sex parent or an overidentification with the opposite sex parent. But in your case, the trauma of being orphaned at 11 means you not only lost the opportunity for healthy gender conditioning, but you went so far as to villainize your replacement parent, Ruth, and thus her femininity.

CAMERON
I don’t resent Ruth.

LYDIA
I believe you do. And in order to move forward and repair that identity you need to become post-familial by separating yourself emotionally from your parents and your need to please them through competitive running.

CAMERON
Ok. I see your point.
(beat)
But maybe I can re-invent my relationship to running. Like, make it a positive thing because exercise gives you endorphins. Which are healthy.

LYDIA
Cameron, your progress is contingent on your ability to abide by your treatment plan without question. Do you understand that? That your success or failure is entirely in your own hands?

CAMERON
Yes.

LYDIA
Good.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The disciples work in small groups, assembling collages. Cameron, Adam and Jane sit together with a stack of torn up magazines including *Montana Woman* and *Christianity Today*. They work in silence for a while cutting and pasting.

CAMERON
I don’t get how making a self portrait out of magazine cutouts is supposed to help us. Like, I’d rather be here than group, but I feel like a tool.

ADAM
Shut your mouth- art therapy’s my favorite!
(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)
You can give meaning to anything- as far your bullshit can take you! Like, that lady riding a horse?

Cameron looks down at the image she's cutting.

CAMERON
Yeah?

ADAM
She's you- galloping away from a past of gender confusion and into a bright future of opposite sex lovemaking.
(getting into it, he picks up a magazine)
This cat? It's the devil. Here you go-

He rips the cat out and hands it to Cameron.

ADAM (CONT'D)
That's your past, the temptations and dangers.

JANE
It's like watching Michelangelo paint the Sistine Chapel.

He flips through the magazine.

ADAM
This Lucky Charms leprechaun? Domesticity and comfort and family. Imagine, you're all eating Lucky Charms: TOGETHER. LIKE A HEALTHY AMERICAN FAMILY.

Back to the magazine.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Lack of a strong male influence is probably the basis of all your problems. So let's look for... here we go.

He yanks out an ad featuring the Marlboro Man.

ADAM (CONT'D)
You're basically done. Everything else is gravy.

She takes in the pieces of torn magazine that are meant to symbolize her life.

CAMERON
It’s like staring into a mirror.

They go back to work in silence. Finally, Jane speaks.

JANE
Have you forgotten yourself yet?

CAMERON
What do you mean?

JANE
Promise has a way of making you disappear and, like, forget who you are.

CAMERON
How is that possible? All I do is talk about myself.

JANE
Yeah, but that’s your *old*, *gay* self. Your *true straight* self is being formed and now you’re like... in utero.

ADAM
All we know for now is that your straight self is not a runner.

CAMERON
What about you?

JANE
I self medicate with weed and Adam. Are you going to use the lady on the horse?

CAMERON
Go for it.

Jane takes the cut out and pastes it onto her collage.

JANE
You have an obligation to fuck with this place as much as possible or you’ll disappear.

Adam starts coloring in the faces of all the people on his collage.

CAMERON
What are you doing?

ADAM
Making them Native.

CAMERON
Oh. Yeah.

ADAM
I keep having to remind myself I'm not white. Sometimes I pass a mirror and it's like, "whoa- that's what I look like?"

JANE
I didn't know that. I'm sorry.

ADAM
Eh. It's not your fault.

They go back to work.

INT. ERIN AND CAMERON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Erin and Cameron lie in their respective beds, in the dark. Cameron's awake, listening to the sound of Erin's heavy breath. She looks over to confirm that she's asleep and brings her right hand under the covers and starts masturbating.

Eyes closed. The wind hits the window. Erin snores lightly. Cameron thinks of Coley. Her hip bone in her hand. Nuzzling her nose into her sweatshirt. Her breath gets heavier as her hips rise, tenting the comforter.

She's almost there, almost there... And then nothing. She collapses back down. She can't come.

INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY

Cameron and Mark are alone in the office, working. Cameron makes photocopies and folds God's Promise leaflets, while Mark talks on the phone.

MARK
Yes! At Memorial Stadium in Lincoln...

Cameron watches Mark laugh.

MARK (CONT'D)
Thank you, that's incredibly generous...
(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)
I hope you know that what you give means something very real to my salvation... God bless you Mr. Phillips. You'll be in my prayers... You too! Bye.

Mark hangs up and scans the paperwork in front of him for the next number.

CAMERON
You're disgustingly good at those calls.

MARK
(not sure how to take that)
Thank you?

CAMERON
I hate talking on the phone.

MARK
It's not hard.
(handing the phone over)
Here, take the next one.

CAMERON
No way.

MARK
What's the worst that could happen?

CAMERON
I insult someone and lose a potential donation.

MARK
Forget the money. The point is to have a human connection with the person on the other end of the line.

CAMERON
(in a robot voice)
BUT I AM NOT HUMAN. I AM A ROBOT. LIKE VICKY ON SMALL WONDER.

Mark starts dialing. The phone rings

CHRISTIAN DONER (O.S.)
Hello?

Mark hands Cameron the phone.

CAMERON
Hi.

CHRISTIAN DONER (O.S.)
May I ask who’s calling?

CAMERON
Yes, sorry, this is Cameron.

She looks at Mark.

MARK
(whispering)
A disciple from God’s Promise.

CAMERON
A disciple from God’s Promise.

MARK
(whispering)
I’m calling to thank you for your previous donation.

CAMERON
I’m calling to thank you for your previous donation...

Mark gestures for her to keep going. Cameron nods, listening to the person on the other end of the line.

CAMERON (CONT’D)
Yes, I agree. Your neighbor sounds like he *would* benefit from a place like.... Yeah, I think so... Well, like, we don’t really have much contact with the outside world, so I’m staying out of trouble...

Mark gives her a look.

CAMERON (CONT’D)
No, no, we go out sometimes. I mean, who needs the outside world when you’re building your relationship with god?

Cameron looks to Mark for help.

CAMERON (CONT’D)
There’s something I have to- It’s an emergency and I must.. depart now. I’m so sorry. Bye.

Cameron hangs up the phone.

MARK
I actually think that went really well.

CAMERON
Really?

MARK
No.

Cameron bursts into a surprised snort of laughter.

MARK (CONT'D)
This time try not to make it sound like prison.

Mark starts dialing another number.

CAMERON
(in her robot voice)
CANNOT ENDURE HUMILIATION AGAIN.
ROBOT POWERING DOOOWWWWWWN.

And with that she lets her upper body fall limp.

INT. MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE - DAY

Rows of bookshelves, Montana State's blue & yellow memorabilia and snacks. The disciples browse the store.

Cameron walks with Erin.

ERIN
Lydia says we can use the rec room if we get up early.

Cameron watches as Adam discreetly slips a candy bar down his pants.

ERIN (CONT'D)
Tandy Campbell's a huge deal. My mom went to one of her power weekends in San Diego.

CAMERON
I bet my aunt Ruth knows about her.

Jane pockets a slim book and exits the shop with Adam close behind.

ERIN
I'm sure. She's totally amazing. I need a workout buddy and you can't run so it's a perfect fit!

CAMERON
We'll see.

Erin gets distracted by some magazines on the wall and Cameron takes the opportunity to walk off.

Reaching the music section, Cameron glances at the tapes. She looks around. No one in sight. In one swift move, she shoves The Breeders' LAST SPLASH into the back waistband of her pants. This happens just as Erin approaches.

ERIN
We should get in line if- You're stealing! You just stole something.

CAMERON
I didn't do anything! It's not stealing until you leave the store. Lemme put it back.

Cameron pulls the tape free and places it back on the shelf. Mark is standing at a nearby shelf and notices what's going on.

ERIN
(horrified)
No. No way. You had the sin in your heart, and that's what counts. I don't want to tattle on you, but you need help with this.

CAMERON
(desperate)
It's on the shelf.

Erin shakes her head, her cheeks red.

ERIN
I'm not being a good friend if I ignore your sin.

A couple of college students in baggy flannel shirts and dreadlocks walk down the aisle, brushing past. They notice Erin's T-shirt, which has the Reese's Peanut Butter Cup logo on it, only it reads, "JESUS, KING OF KINGS".

STUDENT 1
Nice shirt.

A few tears slide down Erin's cheeks.

CAMERON
Ok. I'll tell.

Erin leans in for a big hug.

ERIN
It's the right choice.

Mark approaches them.

MARK
Hey guys.

ERIN
Mark!

MARK
I saw what happened.

CAMERON
I put it back and I'm really sorry.

MARK
I know. And I think Erin was right to stop you.

ERIN
Thank you.

CAMERON
I know.

MARK (CONT'D)
It took a lot of courage.

CAMERON
I know.

MARK
But maybe we should keep this between us.

ERIN
Really?

CAMERON
(taken by surprise)
Why?

MARK
Because you made a split second mistake and you're sorry.
(to Erin)
(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)
But that’s just my opinion. What do you think?

ERIN
I don’t know.

MARK
(to Cameron)
Have you learnt your lesson?

CAMERON
I’m so ashamed.

ERIN
I just want to look out for you the way I’d hope you’d look out for me.

CAMERON
I know. And I really appreciate that.

Cameron hugs Erin.

CAMERON (CONT’D)
Thank you.

She says it to Erin, but she’s looking straight at Mark.

INT. CHRISTIAN CONCERT - DAY

Alternative Christian Rock in all it’s glory. The audience is packed and loving every minute of it.

Cameron slips away and weaves through the crowd. She watches the young fans sing along to the lyrics. Their complete devotion and excitement is alienating.

Out of the corner of her eye she sees a BOY, 19, watching her. She turns away automatically and then looks back. He smiles. She approaches. Deep breath.

CAMERON
Hey.

BOY
Hi. Having fun?

CAMERON
Yeah. You?

BOY
Yeah. I was about to buy a coke, you want one?

CAMERON
Thanks.

BOY
Wait here, ok?

CAMERON
Ok.

He goes to the bar and looks back at her with a smile while he waits to be served. The moment his back is turned she runs off, disappearing into the crowd.

She pushes into the mass. Lots of couples. Two teens hold hands and kiss chastely. She looks back to make sure the Boy she was talking to is out of sight and then cuts through the couple to get to the other side of the venue where Erin waves her over.

ERIN
That guy was HOT.

Cameron shrugs.

ERIN (CONT'D)
What did he say to you?

CAMERON
He was looking for the bathroom.

ERIN
Oh.
(re: the band)
Aren't they the best?

CAMERON
(trying)
Yeah!

Erin starts singing along to the music. The entire crowd is swaying and mouthing the words.

She spots Jane and Adam who really stand out in the sea of fans. They look like they're at a funeral.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
(to Erin)
Gonna get a coke.

Erin's too caught up in the music to notice and Cameron makes her way over to Jane and Adam.

ADAM
Check out Helen.

They look over. She's got fat tears of joy crawling down her cheeks.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Her panties would be up on that stage if she weren't so afraid of the wrath of god.

Cameron so overcome with gratitude for their presence she wraps her arms around them both and squeezes.

INT. GROUP THERAPY - DAY

Helen and Cameron lie on their backs on the ground, heads next to each other. They stare up at the ugly ceiling. You can hear the other disciples talking around them.

HELEN
So I've been singing and training since I was 5. It's my thing and most recently I was in the girls ensemble at my church, which is a big deal, like you have to audition and most members are over 17 and I was the youngest 2nd Alto they've ever had. Um. I wanted to use my voice in service of God and I can't do that if I'm living with sin in my heart and they could tell, of course they could all see that I was struggling with SSA and I was asked to leave the group and it was... Yeah, that was the worst day of my life.

Helen wipes her tears.

HELEN (CONT'D)
What about you?

CAMERON
I can't think of anything.

HELEN
Don't over-think it. When did your same sex attractions get in the way of your goals?

Cameron takes a moment to consider this.

CAMERON
...I don't know.

Helen sits up and looks at her. Cameron sits up too.

HELEN
Why can't you try?

CAMERON
I am.

HELEN
(getting worked up)
No, you're not!

The other disciples stop what they're doing.

LYDIA
Is there a problem?

HELEN
(in tears)
I'm sorry. I don't know why I'm...
(to Cameron)
Is this just a joke to you?

CAMERON
What? I didn't do anything!

HELEN
Exactly. You never say anything. Your silence feels aggressive and judgemental and it makes this space not safe.

CAMERON
That's ridiculous.

LYDIA
Helen perceives hostility in your behavior. Whether or not you agree you have to recognize that as her truth.

CAMERON
(to Helen)
What do you want me to say?

HELEN
Anything! Just be honest. Like, I saw your iceberg and it looks like you copied it off Erin's. Do you even want to get better?

CAMERON
(genuine)
Of course I do!

ERIN
Tell us about the girl you knew from home.

Cameron looks at her, shocked. She looks at Lydia who nods for her to go on.

CAMERON
I don't know. Her name's Coley. We were in the same bible study.

ERIN
What was she like?

CAMERON
Perfect. But not full of herself. The kind of person who no matter who you are you meet her and you wanna be friends.

ERIN
What did she look like?

CAMERON
(embarrassed)
Pretty. Long dark hair, brown eyes.

LYDIA
It's said that cannibals only eat the enemies they admire, as a way to take on their best traits.

CAMERON
(unsure how to respond)
Ok.

LYDIA
The way you speak reveals a compulsion to take into yourself the qualities you admired in this girl.

CAMERON
Like, I wanted to be LIKE her, and I confused that with being WITH her?

LYDIA
Correct.

This strikes a chord. Mark watches Cam work it out.

CAMERON
(trying to protest)
But then why did... I don't know. Ok. I guess I never thought of it like that.

HELEN
(having a breakthrough)
It's like I thought I was in love with Vicky Jones, but what I really loved was her perfect pitch. And I'd never admit it before, but yeah, I totally wish I was a 1st soprano.

The room waits for Helen to finish having a moment so they can move on.

INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY

Cameron and Mark are back at their respective desks in the office, doing paperwork and making calls.

CAMERON
....Your support is really appreciated.... Yes, of course.... Well, yeah. I am making friends.... I guess, the thing about it is- you're kinda forced to be honest and I wasn't really honest before.... Yeah, it was. And I think I did- I felt a lot pressure hiding and having a secret.... Thank you. I hope so too.... I'll make a note of that and have Rick call you back. Thank you so much for your support.... Yes, you too. Have a great day. Bye.

Cameron hangs up the phone as she takes note of the donation.

MARK
Well done!

CAMERON
I whored myself out for donation money. I feel cheap.

MARK
Did you tell her the truth?

CAMERON
Yes.

MARK
Then you're not cheap.
(beat)
Can I ask a personal question?

CAMERON
Shoot.

MARK
Do you believe in God?

She considers this.

CAMERON
I do.

MARK
Then that's really all you need to know right now and the rest will fall into place.

Cameron nods and waits for more, but that's it. He goes back to work and so does she.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Dinner prep. Steve and Helen are working on making a casserole with cans of Campbell's Cream of Mushroom soup and a plastic bag of frozen chicken cutlets. Adam, Cameron and Jane peel potatoes in a corner and talk quietly so nobody can hear them. Gospel plays on the radio.

CAMERON
His dad has billboards on the interstate?

ADAM
I shit you not.

CAMERON
I can't believe Mark never said anything. But I guess he wouldn't want to brag.

JANE
Only in this twillight-zone nightmare does saying your dad's a big deal preacher count as "bragging."

CAMERON
What does he wear to sleep? In my head it's a matching pajama and robe set.

Adam laughs.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
What? I'm serious.

ADAM
That's why I'm laughing. The system's working on you.

CAMERON
What? No. Fuck off.

ADAM
You're one wet dream away from jumping his bones.

Cameron's silenced and they focus on meditative potato peeling. The whole room loses itself in the rhythm of their food preparation until the radio calls attention to itself.

The station keeps going in and out, the hiss of the static taking over. Jane changes the station. FOUR NON-BLONDES' "What's Up" plays. Cameron hums along. Steve turns the volume up, Cameron and Adam can't help but sing along.

CAMERON & ADAM
(singing)
And I try, oh my god do I try I try all the time. In this institution.

Adam cuts out and watches Cameron, amused.

CAMERON
And I pray, oh my god do I pray. I pray every single day for a revolution.

She gets really into it, working the entire room.

ADAM
This is really embarrassing. Please don't stop.

CAMERON
And so I cry sometimes
When I'm lying in bed
Just to get it all out
What's in my head

Jane hands her a potato masher, which Cameron uses as a microphone. Everyone cheers her on. Lydia appears at the door of the kitchen, but nobody notices. Helen whistles.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
And I, I am feeling a little peculiar. And so I wake in the morning and I step outside And I take a deep breath and I get real high and I scream from the top of my lungs: What's going on?

Lydia shuts the radio off. The room goes silent.

LYDIA
Back to work.

Everyone resumes their work.

CAMERON
Sorry. The station went static so we changed it.

LYDIA
Adam, if I have to tell you once more to remove the hair from your face it's being shaved off. Cameron, come with me.

Cameron follows Lydia.

INT. LYDIA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

As Cameron watches from the door, Lydia opens a closet and pulls out a dented package and a stack of rubber-banded letters. Everything's clearly been opened and examined by staff. She hands the pile of mail to Cameron.

CAMERON
Why now?

LYDIA
Breakthroughs don't always happen during a session. I think you'll benefit from what's in these letters.

Lydia locks the cabinet and they exit her office.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lydia leaves to give Cameron some privacy.

CAMERON
(calling after her)
Thank you.

Cameron sits down and opens the care package first. Inside is a batch of moldy brownies from her grandmother. She scans the envelopes. There are some letters from Ruth as well as a pink envelope. Cameron flips it over to see that the return address on the back says COLEY TAYLOR. She rips it open to find a single sheet of matching pink stationery.

While reading, the color drains from her face. Once she's done, she throws out the brownies and shoves the letters into her pocket before returning to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Cameron walks in. Jane and Adam stop mashing potatoes.

JANE
Are you in trouble?

ADAM
What happened?

CAMERON
She gave me my mail.

ADAM
Whoa.

JANE
Anything good?

Cameron hands Jane the pink letter. Jane looks at it and registers who it's from.

JANE (CONT'D)
They let her write you?

ADAM
Lemme see.

He grabs the letter from Jane's hands.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Dear Cameron, I'm very angry at you for taking advantage of our friendship.
Shit.

CAMERON
Keep reading.

ADAM
You already had this thing in you, but I didn't. When I think of how long it took me to gain the strength to tell my mom, I feel sick with-

CAMERON
She told. It wasn't Jamie.

Cameron struggles to gain control of her breath- she looks like she's about to have a panic attack.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
What if I'm sick and I infected her? Like, I took advantage and I didn't even realize I was doing it?

Jane snatches the letter from Adam's hands.

JANE
No. Pink stationary does not get to fuck with you.

Jane stuffs the letter into the sink garbage disposal, chasing it down with water.

JANE (CONT'D)
The girl is spineless. Let's say what you did was fucked up and you infected her or whatever- it was a shit move to rat you out.

CAMERON
She was trying to help me.

JANE
She's a fucking rat.

ADAM
And she misspelled "courage".

CAMERON
(Snapping)
No. It's not like, "Oh, fuck it. She's an idiot." She's not- she's not a joke, she's... better than all of us and I hurt her and you don't fucking get it. The things I do, they have consequences, ok? And what if they're right? What if this is our chance and we're blowing it?
(MORE)

CAMERON (CONT'D)
Like, making phonecalls with Mark was the first time I didn’t feel completely disgusted with myself in forever and it was such a fucking relief.

Silence as they take this in.

ADAM
I don’t know.

JANE
Maybe you’re supposed to feel disgusted with yourself when you’re a teenager. Maybe that’s the point.

Cameron storms off.

INT. CAMERON & ERIN’S ROOM - LATER

Cameron’s curled up in her bed, clutching the pink envelope. Lydia enters and cameron sits up, focuses on folding and unfolding the envelope into tiny pieces. Lydia’s soft, almost maternal.

LYDIA
How are you feeling Cameron?

CAMERON
Ok.

LYDIA
You don’t seem okay.

CAMERON
I’ve been better.

LYDIA
How did it feel to read that letter from Coley?

CAMERON
Not great.

LYDIA
You’re facing the consequences of your actions and it’s ugly.

Cameron nods.

CAMERON
Okay, I’m facing it. It’s ugly. Now what?

LYDIA
Now you stop fighting the process.

Lydia gets up and exits.

CAMERON
Is it true that Rick's your nephew?

This takes Lydia by surprise. They stare at each other for a moment.

LYDIA
That's none of your business.

Lydia leaves the room.

INT. ACTIVITY ROOM - DAY

Erin is doing lunges as the opening credits of the workout video play. The sequence features Tandy and her friends running on the beach.

Cameron watches from the door. Upbeat music blares, "FUN TO BLESSERCIZE WITH JESUS"

TANDY
You know it's God who created these bodies of ours? And it's God who blesses them. And with his help, we can keep these bodies working in optimum condition! Are you ready to start your Fun to be Fit Blessercize workout? COME ON EVERYBODY!

And with that, the workout begins.

At first, Cameron just watches. Eventually, she joins in and when Erin spots her out of the corner of her eye, she runs to the closet, pulls out a set of 3 pound weights and places them in front of Cameron before returning to her workout.

MONTAGE

"FUN TO BLESSERCIZE WITH JESUS" continues to play with Tandy's voice giving instructions

TANDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Give me some JOY BLASTS now!

- Cameron makes a phone call during evangelical detail. Mark watches her, but he's different. Detached.

CAMERON
That's very generous, Mr. Harrington- thank you. You too.

- Rick is preaching and Cameron nods her head in agreement as she listens.

- Cameron and Erin are back in the activity room, following the video. It's a different day and more challenging. Lydia stands at the door, monitoring them.

TANDY (O.S.)
Give me a spiritual lift! We are toning more than your muscles here people!

- Cameron and Adam struggle with an old can opener while preparing dinner. Lydia walks in to see his hair over his eyes.

- Lydia shaves Adam's head.

- Cameron writes in her iceberg, which is now covered in notes. She squeezes in: RESENTMENT OF RUTH/REJECTION OF FEMININITY REPLACEMENT PARENT.

- Erin and Cameron struggle through a series of sit-ups. Their hair sweaty, sticking to their foreheads.

TANDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
We're developing our inner person here and your outer person is going to show it!

They get to their last sit up and then collapse, breathing heavily.

FLASH as Jane's Polaroid takes a shot of them panting.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Group therapy prayer chain. All eyes closed. Steve leads:

EVERYONE
The opposite of the sin of homosexuality is not heterosexuality: it is holiness.

Everyone takes their seat and Lydia consults her notebook.

LYDIA
Mark. Why don't you start us off?

There's something different about Mark. It's like all the joy and optimism has been bled from him.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
I know that you've had an especially hard week.

MARK
Every week is especially hard.

Mark keeps his eyes down, flicking the cover of his Bible so that it lifts open some and then falls back against his finger.

LYDIA
Is there something -

MARK
If you want me to talk about my father, then you should just say so.

Cameron, sitting across from him in the circle, watches his neck muscles tense.

LYDIA
It sounds to me like it's you who wants to talk about your father's decision.

MARK
What's there to say? You read the letter.

He looks around the circle, a strange grin on his face.

MARK (CONT'D)
(reciting from memory)
"I'm denying your request to return home at the end of the summer. You are still very feminine and I cannot have this weakness in my home. It sends the message to my congregation that I approve of it when I do not."

Lydia writes down some notes.

LYDIA
How did this make you feel, Mark?

MARK
I want to read a passage. It's one of my father's favorites.

LYDIA
Please do.

Mark stands up, his bible open but he's not actually reading. As he speaks, his voice gets louder and louder, edging on frantic.

MARK
There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

He pauses, looks up to ceiling to keep the tears from falling. Steve tries to pass him some tissues, but he ignores him.

CAMERON
...Mark?

MARK
And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

He pauses again, pushes down his emotions.

MARK (CONT'D)
Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Mark breathes out hard, he looks up straight at Cameron.

MARK (CONT'D)
(quietly, with lucidity)
For when I am weak, then am I strong.

As he finishes, he closes his Bible and drops it.

LYDIA
There's no need for theatrics. If you sit down, we can talk about the passage you've selected.

Instead of sitting, Mark moves into the center of the small circle of chairs and starts doing jumping jacks. Perfect-form, hand-clap-above-the-head jumping jacks as he shouts.

MARK
"For when I am weak then am I strong!" so weakness actually equals strength. That means I have the strength of ten Marks. Twenty!

He stops the jumping jacks and crouches down, fast, with military precision as he puts his two palms flat on the floor, shoots his legs out and knocks out push-ups, one after another.

MARK (CONT'D)
For when I'm weak, I am strong. I AM STRONG. I AM STRONG.

Lydia stands.

LYDIA
Stop it, Mark. RIGHT. NOW.

As he's in the down position, Lydia manages to get her right foot, planted squarely on the small of his back. She applies enough weight to keep him from rising back up.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
I'll remove my foot when you're ready to get control of yourself.

Mark, grunting through clenched teeth, starts extending his elbows and raises himself back off the ground. Lydia loses balance. Mark powers through, extending his arms all the way.

And as soon as he's won he collapses to the floor, sobbing.

MARK
(almost inaudible)
I'm sorry. I can't, I can't do it.

It's too messy, too vulnerable. Lydia crouches down next to him and puts a hand on his back. Cameron approaches Mark.

LYDIA
(to everybody)
Go to your rooms until dinner.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
(to Cameron)
Now.

Everyone start gathering their books and pretend not to linger. Cameron hesitates before walking away.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The disciples linger outside the door. Nobody knows what to make of what happened. Cameron locks eyes with Dane. There's nothing to say. She looks down.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cameron, Jane and Adam (with a newly shaved head) chopping vegetables.

JANE
What's the full report?

ADAM
I came back to find Rick and Lydia in our room and Mark's completely out of it and they're saying all kinds of shit.

CAMERON
Like what?

Adam shrugs. Runs his hands through his bald scalp.

ADAM
The usual bullshit, "*It's gonna be all right; you're facing your sin;*" and then they acted out the final scene from DIRTY DANCING with the lift.

Cameron doesn't laugh.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Steve told me Mark, like, did a push up with Lydia standing on his back. Did that seriously happen?!

CAMERON
She had one foot on him. Some of her weight.

ADAM
Our group never has this kind of excitement.

CAMERON
(snapping)
He was completely out of control.

JANE
It must have been a little bit funny.

CAMERON
No. Not at all.

They continue working in silence.

INT. CAMERON & ERIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

The room is silent as they both get ready for bed. Cameron's in a daze, brushing the knots out of her wet hair. Erin rubs lotion into her elbows.

ERIN
Cameron? Would it be okay to ask for a hug?

Cameron considers this, surprised. She hugs Erin. It's a stiff hug at first, but then Cameron eases into it, finding herself comforted.

INT. CAMERON & ERIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

A loud crash comes from down the hall. Cameron's eyes snap open.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

It's pitch dark and there's nobody in sight. Cameron walks slowly, listening for noise.

INT. ADAM & MARK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Cameron enters the room to find both beds are empty.

INT. BOY'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cameron enters the bathroom. It's pitch black, but there's a strobe light effect coming from ambulance lights flashing outside the window. She approaches the window but stops when she steps in a pool of liquid.

She switches the light on by the door, squints as her eyes adjust. Looks down to see blood soaking through her white socks.

There's blood all over the tiled floor, blood on the wall- it's a mess. She spots a double edge razor on the floor. It's opened, the blade pulled out and lying next to it.

The ambulance pull out of the driveway. The strobe light disappears fast while the sound of wheels on dirt takes a while to fade.

Cameron's frozen in place, shaking.

INT. CAFETERIA - MORNING

Helen's crying. Cameron sits at a table, tired, numb. Everyone's in their pajamas, gathered around Rick and Lydia with the exception of Adam and Mark. Jane tries to get Cameron's attention, but Cameron ignores her.

RICK
-What's important, is that we got him to the hospital, and his dad's already flown in and he's stable. He's going to be okay.

DANE
Fuck this. Ya'll are talking like a hamster wheel. What did he do? If he didn't try to kill himself, then what?

LYDIA
Yelling and swearing won't make you feel better about Mark.

DANE
See, there you're wrong, 'cause it does, actually. It makes me feel a fuck of a lot better.

Helen starts giggling uncontrollably behind her wad of tissues.

HELEN
(giggling)
I'm sorry. I'm sorry, I can't stop.

Right then Reverend Rick claps his hands. He's never been this authoritative before.

RICK
Everyone go to your rooms. We're going to have individual one-on-ones.

Everybody's frozen. Lydia does not like the spontaneity of his plan.

RICK (CONT'D)
Go to your rooms and wait till we call you.

Everyone gets up slowly.

RICK (CONT'D)
Helen and Dane, stay.

They remain seated as everyone else walks out. Jane tries to hold Cameron's hand to pull her aside, but Cameron shakes her off and storms out of the room.

INT. CAMERON & ERIN'S ROOM - LATER

Cameron's in running clothes, tying her laces. There's a knock at the door.

RICK
Do you have a minute for me?

Cameron doesn't look up from her laces as he enters.

CAMERON
Sure.

RICK
It's 10 degrees out.

CAMERON
I'll wear layers.

RICK
Is there anything you wanna talk about?

CAMERON
Is he gonna be all right?

Rick nods. He looks down and tucks some hair behind his ear. Sometimes he takes on the persona of a teen pop star.

RICK
I think so. It's a serious injury.

CAMERON
This is pointless if you're not going to actually tell us what happened.

RICK
I'll tell you if that's what you want. It's, ah...

CAMERON
I can handle ugly.

RICK
Last night Mark used a razor to cut his genitals several times; then he poured bleach over the wounds.

CAMERON
Jesus.

RICK
Adam's the one who found him.

CAMERON
Why'd you leave him alone if you were so worried?

This cuts close to the bone.

RICK
I don't have a very good answer for you.

CAMERON
Is Adam okay?

RICK
I think so, all things considered. It's gonna take him some time to process.

His use of the word "process" sets Cameron off- she stands up, furious.

CAMERON
How the fuck do you *process* finding your roommate trying to cut his dick off? Maybe Adam can put it on his fucking iceberg?
(the truth hits her as she speaks)
(MORE)

CAMERON (CONT'D)
You guys don’t even know what you’re doing, do you? You’re just, like, making it up as you go along.

Rick takes this in. Tears fill his eyes as he tries to formulate a response.

RICK
(crying)
I don’t know how to answer you right now, Cam. I’m so sorry.

She pats his back from above to console him. It’s awkward. He pulls himself together.

RICK (CONT’D)
You’re right to be upset about this. But for now the best thing I can tell you is that we’ll let Christ lead us to the answers.

He’s lost her.

CAMERON
Sure.

Silence.

RICK
This means something to me.

And with that he leaves and she continues getting ready for her run.

EXT. GOD’S PROMISE - DAY

Cameron sprints along the property. It’s cold and wet, but she’s full of rage and feels none of it.

INT. ADAM & MARK’S ROOM - DAY

Adam and Jane sit on his bed while Cameron paces the room.

JANE
I didn’t even know Mark shaved.

ADAM
He doesn’t.

Pointing at an empty case on his night stand.

ADAM (CONT'D)
It was my razor. My dad gave it to me for Christmas.

Cameron examines Mark's side of the room. A photo of his family at church. She opens the closet to find a perfectly pressed row of shirts.

ADAM (CONT'D)
I thought he was dead. That's what I told Rick. I said, 'Mark's dead on the floor.'

Jane and Cameron take this in.

ADAM (CONT'D)
His dad wouldn't let us stay at the hospital. I hope he rots in hell.

JANE
Think how freaked out he must be.

ADAM
It's his fault.

JANE
He thinks he's saving his son from eternal damnation.

ADAM
Fuck you, Jane. Seriously. That guy is 100% a piece of shit and so are you for defending him. And what the fuck is wrong with you that you're attracted to Lydia?

Jane has no answer. Silence.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Sorry.

JANE
It's okay. You're right.

ADAM
Don't just give me an automatic dick pass because I found Mark.

Cameron joins them on the bed. She wraps Adam's arm around herself.

CAMERON
"Automatic Dick Pass" is totally gonna be the name of your autobiography.

Nobody laughs, but they relax a bit. Jane rubs Adam's back. The three of them look small and young, huddled on the bed.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Cameron walks down the hallways and overhears a girl on the phone.

GIRL
The yellow dress? With the ruffles? That sounds nice. Will you take pictures?

Silent tears run down the girl's face. She wipes them away and tries to keep her voice chipper.

GIRL (CONT'D)
You should ask mom to do it in braids.

Cameron keeps walking and pauses when she hears Lydia's voice. Her door is slightly ajar.

LYDIA (O.S.)
Unacceptable.

She peeks and sees Lydia on the phone, tapping her long elegant nails against the desk.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
We're fighting for the well-being of our children's future- of the country's future. That's not a responsibility I take lightly.

Lydia listens, defeated with her head down as the person on the other end of the line speaks. It's a tiny private moment and Cameron's compelled by the rare glimpse of vulnerability. Then Lydia's head starts to move and Cameron slips out of sight.

INT. DINING HALL - NIGHT

The dining hall has been turned into a make-shift cinema with a bed sheet and projector. All staff and disciples sit watching THE SOUND OF MUSIC.

The mood is somber and sad, especially in contrast to the film, which is at a lively musical number.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Cameron and Dane make eye contact as they cross paths- Dane on his way out of a classroom and Cameron heading into it. He has a look of defeat on his face.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cameron walks in to find MR. JACOBS (45), a bored, slightly checked-out government employee.

MR. JACOBS
Hello Cameron, my name is Michael Jacobs - I'm from the Child and Family Service Department.

CAMERON
Hi.

MR. JACOBS
I have a couple of questions for you. Is that alright?

CAMERON
Sure.

MR. JACOBS
Great.

He refers to his questionnaire and makes notes as Cameron answers, barely looking at her.

MR. JACOBS (CONT'D)
How often do you eat meals?

CAMERON
Three times a day.

MR. JACOBS
How much time do you spend on schoolwork, both in the classroom and otherwise, each day?

CAMERON
Like, maybe 4 hours?

MR. JACOBS
What is the level of supervision?

CAMERON
For school work?

MR. JACOBS
Yes.

CAMERON
Medium? It’s mostly independent study.

MR. JACOBS
Do you have access to the outdoors on a daily basis?

CAMERON
Yes.

MR. JACOBS
Do you feel safe in your dorm rooms at night?

CAMERON
Yes.

MR. JACOBS
Do you feel threatened by any staff members or fellow students?

CAMERON
No.

MR. JACOBS
Do you trust those in charge here?

Beat.

CAMERON
Not really.

Mr. Jacobs pauses and looks up.

MR. JACOBS
You don’t trust the staff here?

CAMERON
Well, trust them how? What do you mean by trust?

MR. JACOBS
Do you believe that they have your best interests in mind?

Cameron shrugs.

CAMERON
You're saying that like it's black and white or whatever.

MR. JACOBS
I'm not trying to trick you with these questions.

CAMERON
Maybe if you lived here, you'd feel differently.

Cameron stares at Mr. Jacob's tie.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
I like your tie.

He looks down to see which one he's wearing.

MR. JACOBS
Thanks, it's new. My wife got it for me.

CAMERON
It's nice.

MR. JACOBS
She's kind of a clothes horse.

He consults his notes.

MR. JACOBS (CONT'D)
Do you think you can tell me more specifically what you mean when you say that you can't trust the staff here?

CAMERON
I would say that Rick and Lydia and everybody else associated with Promise think they're doing what's best for us, but just because you think something doesn't make it true.

Mr. Jacob waits for her to continue.

MR. JACOBS
Are you saying that their method of treatment is abusive?

CAMERON
Nobody's beating us.
(she thinks for a moment)
(MORE)

CAMERON (CONT'D)
You asked me if I trust them, and like, I trust them to drive the vans safely, and I trust that they'll buy food, but I don't trust that they know what's best for my soul.
(beat)
Look, I know you're here because of what happened to Mark.

MR. JACOBS
What Mr. Turner did to himself.

Cameron raises an eyebrow.

MR. JACOBS (CONT'D)
You said what happened to him. Something didn't just happen to him. He injured himself.

CAMERON
Yeah, while under the care of this facility.

MR. JACOBS
Correct. That's why I'm here: to investigate the care that is given by those who run this facility, but not to investigate the mission of the facility, unless that includes abuse or neglect.

CAMERON
But isn't there, like, emotional abuse?

MR. JACOBS
There is.
(shifting gears)
Do you feel that you've been emotionally abused by the staff here?

CAMERON
How is programming people to hate themselves not emotional abuse?

This hangs in the air for a moment. Mr. Jacobs closes his notebook to conclude the meeting.

MR. JACOBS
I've taken note of what you've said and it will go in the official file.

CAMERON
Thank you.

MR. JACOBS
Please send Dane Cromps in next.

Cameron leaves the room.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As Cameron exits, she notices that Lydia's office's door - opposite the classroom - is open. She's monitoring each kid walk in and out.

Seeing Lydia standing there, proud and stern- triggers something in Cameron. She turns and heads down the corridor in the opposite direction.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Cameron enters, checks to make sure nobody has seen her and shuts the door behind her. She picks up the phone and dials a number. She stands, one eye on the door. The phone rings a few times before someone picks up.

GRANDMA (O.S.)
Hello?

CAMERON
Grandma?

GRANDMA (O.S.)
Cam?

CAMERON
Hi.

GRANDMA (O.S.)
What a nice surprise! How are ya?

CAMERON
I miss you.

GRANDMA (O.S.)
Are you okay?

Beat.

CAMERON
If I told you that I was unhappy, would you bring me home?

GRANDMA (O.S.)
What's going on?

CAMERON
It's not safe here. I have to get out.

GRANDMA (O.S.)
Cameron, there's no need to be dramatic.

CAMERON
One of the kids hurt himself. Bad.

GRANDMA (O.S.)
We got a letter about that. It's okay to be upset, but these things happen. Don't let one rotten apple spoil the bunch.

CAMERON
He wasn't rotten though, he was the best: the best Christian, the best student!

GRANDMA (O.S.)
It sounds like he wasn't right in the head, honey.

CAMERON
This place can make you crazy.

Cameron waits for a response.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
Grandma?

GRANDMA (O.S.)
Listen to me good. You brought this on yourself, okay? You needed sorting out and you're at the place to do it. End of discussion.

Cameron digests this.

CAMERON
Okay.

GRANDMA (O.S.)
Tell me about your roommate. Ruth said she's a Vikings fan.

CAMERON
I should actually go, Grandma.
(beat)
It's getting late and I'm on dinner duty.

GRANDMA (O.S.)
Ok, then. I'm glad you're learning how to cook. Maybe you can show us what you've learnt at Christmas.

CAMERON
I can do a casseroles with Campbell's cream of mushroom and chicken cutlets.

GRANDMA (O.S.)
I'm impressed. I'll make sure we've got the ingredients when you get here.

CAMERON
Thanks.

GRANDMA (O.S.)
I love you Cam.

CAMERON
I love you too. Bye Grandma.

GRANDMA (O.S.)
Bye honey.

Cameron hangs up the phone and bursts into tears. The ugly, snot-running-down-your-face brand of tears that are desperate and last too long.

INT. DINING HALL - NIGHT

It's Karaoke night. Steve is doing the world's whitest rendition of "Oh Happy Day" and taking it very seriously.

Cameron, Jane and Adam browse through the songbook. They whisper as they pretend to choose songs.

CAMERON
I'm not staying at Promise. I'm leaving.

Adam and Jane are shocked. Mostly that they didn't think of this first.

ADAM
I'm in. I'll steal the van keys. We can be in Canada by morning.

JANE
They'd stop a stolen van at the border. And who do you know in Canada?

ADAM
Ok, we drive somewhere else.

CAMERON
Where?

ADAM
We'll figure it out on the road.

Erin looks over at them and they shut up and listen to Steve, who finishes his song. Everyone claps.

Helen takes the stage and bows her head in prayer.

HELEN
God, please help so that the pitch and lyrics become second nature and I can sing in worship from my heart.

The music begins and Helen starts singing Amy Grant's "Baby Baby".

CAMERON
What if we slip off during a food run?

ADAM
One time I tried to take a shit at McDonalds and Lydia almost knocked the door down after two minutes.

JANE
Plus we wouldn't be able to bring food or clothes.

They watch Helen and think.

HELEN
(singing)
Stop for a minute. Baby I'm so glad you're mine. Yeah.

JANE
I'm coming with you, but we need a comprehensive plan.

ADAM
Stop being such dykes. Are we building a gazebo or escaping?

CAMERON
No, she's right. We need a plan.

Helen's voice struggles to keep up with the song.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Everyone studies quietly at their desks while Bethany grades papers. The post-Mark regime is in full swing and the class is somber and obedient.

The bell rings and everyone gathers their things. Cameron, Jane and Adam exit quietly.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
How long is the hike usually? When would they expect us back?

JANE
I think we'd have a good 6 hours until they start looking for us.

CAMERON
Either way it's enough time to put some distance between us.

ADAM
Who's gonna ask Lydia? Not it.

JANE
Not it.

CAMERON
It's fine, I'll do it.

INT. PIE SHOP - LATER

The disciples are sitting together having pie in a small cafe in Bozeman. Helen talks to Jane, but she isn't listening.

She's got one eye on Cameron, who slips away, towards the women's bathroom and the other eye on Lydia and Rick, who are ordering. Adam is blocking their view of the bathroom, keeping them occupied with small talk.

Cameron grabs the pay phone receiver off its hook and inserts coins.

HELEN (O.S.)
I didn't know the answer and first I let myself have a complete freak out, but then I started to pray...

The phone rings. She has her finger on the receiver, ready to hang up if his mom answers.

JAMIE (O.S.)
Hello?

Cameron sighs relieved.

CAMERON
Jamie? It's me.

Silence.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
Cameron.

JAMIE (O.S.)
I know. I'm just surprised. How are you? Are you at that place?

CAMERON
Yeah. Listen, I'm really, deeply, sorry.
(deep breath)
It wasn't fair. I didn't tre-

JAMIE (O.S.)
Dude. We're cool.

CAMERON
Yeah?

JAMIE (O.S.)
Yeah.

Silence. Cameron doesn't know how to proceed.

JAMIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I fucked this girl Meghan from Glendive. We met at Buckinghorse.

Cameron smiles.

CAMERON
That's great.

Cameron’s relief is palpable.

EXT. SIDE OF THE HIGHWAY - LATER

The car has a flat and Rick is working on fixing it. All the disciples stand on the side of the road, waiting. Cameron, Jane and Adam sit on the curb, far enough away so nobody can hear if they keep their voices down.

CAMERON
His brother is going to pick us up in Missoula and drive us to Portland where we can stay with him for a few weeks.

JANE
And then what?

CAMERON
I’ll figure something out. I have some money I’ve been saving.

JANE
Ok. Ok. Good. Me too. Do you guys know anyone else that would take us in?

They both think about this.

ADAM
Nope.

Cameron shakes her head “no”.

JANE
That’s fine. Better. No attachments.
(beat)
Maybe we should hold off. Like, until we have a stronger plan. Maybe we’re moving too fast.

CAMERON
You wanna stay and watch Steve, like, blind himself for having a wet dream?

JANE
I just think we should prepare ourselves.

ADAM
How do we prepare ourselves?

JANE
I don't know.

They watch Rick tighten lug nuts with a jack wrench.

CAMERON
Ever since Mark I feel homesick, but I don't know for what. Like, fuck Miles City and fuck God's Promise, but then there's nothing else.

Silence. They reflect on this.

RICK (O.S.)
I did it!

Everyone cheers and boards the bus.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Cameron's writing a paper at her desk. Bethany comes by and leans over her shoulder to read. Her hair brushes alongside Cameron's face. Bethany turns to talk to Cameron. Their mouths are dangerously close.

BETHANY
Have you ever read-

Cameron leans in and kisses her. Bethany pulls Cameron up out of her chair and onto the table. Their limbs are wound up in each other.

ERIN (V.O.)
Cameron?

INT. CAMERON & ERIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Cameron opens her eyes to find Erin's face right in front of hers. She yelps.

ERIN
Shhh-shhh, no, I'm sorry. It's just me.

CAMERON
What the fuck?

ERIN
You were making a lot of noise.

CAMERON
(turning away from her)
Sorry. I'm fine now.

ERIN
What were you dreaming about?

CAMERON
I don't remember. It was scary.

ERIN
No, it wasn't.

CAMERON
Yes it was. Were you dreaming it with me?

ERIN
I was listening to you and those weren't scared noises.

CAMERON
This is fucking ridiculous.
(mashing her face into her pillow)
Go back to bed.

Erin doesn't move.

ERIN
I heard you say Bethany — I heard it more than once.

CAMERON
I don't care.

ERIN
You said it like —

CAMERON
(turning back towards Erin)
I don't care.

Erin suddenly leans in and kisses Cameron. It's a sloppy kiss and misses her mouth. Erin puts her hand on her cheek and kisses her again- this time Cameron kisses her back and Erin maneuvers herself on top. She pulls off Cameron's shirt before going for her shorts. Cameron lifts the hem of Erin's T-shirt but Erin pushes her hand away. Cameron tries again. She stops her.

ERIN
Just let me do this.

Cameron lies back and lets Erin touch her. There's an urgency to the way she fucks.

Cameron comes, hard and fast. Once her breathing steadies, she tries to touch Erin, but something's switched off in Erin. She's different, distant.

ERIN (CONT'D)
No. It's okay. I'm good.

Cameron tries to kiss her neck, but Erin pulls away.

ERIN (CONT'D)
Get off.

CAMERON
Are you serious?

ERIN
I should go back to my bed.

CAMERON
Right now?

ERIN
They could do a pop-in any minute.

Erin pushes her off and goes to her own bed. They lie on their backs in the dark.

ERIN (CONT'D)
You can't tell anyone, Cam.

CAMERON
I won't.

ERIN
I really do want to get past this.

CAMERON
I know. I believe you.

ERIN
I don't care if you believe me or not.
(pause)
I knew this would happen.

CAMERON
I didn't.

ERIN
Because you don't think of me like that.

Tense silence. She's right.

CAMERON
Can I tell you something?

ERIN
It's a free country.

CAMERON
(searching for how to say this)
I've only ever... come once before. With Coley. And I was scared I'd never be able to again.

ERIN
Ok.

CAMERON
I just thought you should know.

ERIN
Thanks.

CAMERON
Anyway, whatever. Goodnight.

ERIN
Night.

They both lie on their backs, wide awake with nothing left to say.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The lights are off in the main hall as Lydia starts to arrange chairs for group therapy.

CAMERON
Dr. March?

LYDIA
Group doesn't start for another 20 minutes.

CAMERON
I know, I wanted to talk to you. I have a request.

LYDIA
I'm listening.

CAMERON
The anniversary of my parents death is coming up.

LYDIA
Yes?

CAMERON
And I feel like I should do something special to remember them. To process my grief.

Lydia stares at her blankly.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
I was wondering if Jane, Adam and I could go on a hike that day. This Saturday. I'd like to go to Quake Lake and read my mother's favorite passage from Ecclesiastes.

LYDIA
I don't think that's the best idea

CAMERON
Why not?

LYDIA
We've covered this, Cameron. Facing the reality of their death is important, but I get the sense this would be in service of the opposite. You idealize them and it's counteractive to your progress. Your gender troubles began at their hands and you need to acknowledge that in order to move forward.

CAMERON
(swallowing her rage)
Fine.

Cameron begins to leave, but then stops and turns to face Lydia.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
Wait, no. I disagree.

LYDIA
I beg your pardon?

CAMERON
My choices are my own, not my parents'.

LYDIA
You can't deny you'd already started down this path while they were alive.

CAMERON
Don't you think I know that?

LYDIA
You're becoming defensive. What's this bringing up for you?

CAMERON
Nothing, I just don't want to blame them for my mistakes. They were great parents.

LYDIA
Being a "great parent" doesn't make you immune to fault.

CAMERON
How is this helpful?

LYDIA
Calm down. We'll resume this during your next session.

Lydia goes back to the chairs. Cameron doesn't move.

CAMERON
I kissed my best friend Irene the day before the accident. I wanted to kiss her again the entire day of their accident, and I did, that night.

Birds can be heard chirping outside.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
You think I don't know the kind of choices I was making before they died?

Lydia smiles.

LYDIA
I think that you let your guilt over their death keep your memories swaddled in protective covering.
(MORE)

LYDIA (CONT'D)
You need to stop making yourself such an important figure, Cameron Post. Your parents didn't die for your sins.

Long silence as Cameron takes this in.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
Enjoy your hike.

CAMERON
Thank you.

Cameron's leaves the room, a bit shell-shocked.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Jane, Adam and Cameron pack their lunches for the next day in silence. Steve walks in and grabs a bag of carrots and a jar of peanut butter. He dips the carrots into the peanut butter and eats as he talks.

STEVE
I was thinking maybe I'd come on that hike with you tomorrow. How far are you going?

ADAM
Far. It'll take all day and we're heading out really early.

Jane has her back to Steve and is giving big freaked out eyes to Cameron.

STEVE
I don't know. I heard Rick might take some of us into Bozeman in the afternoon. Maybe. You think you'll be back in time for that?

CAMERON
Definitely not.

STEVE
I figured.

Steve twists the lid onto the peanut butter.

STEVE (CONT'D)
You'll go back again this summer, right?

ADAM
Of course.

STEVE
I think I'll wait and go then.

Steve grabs a handful of grapes off the bunch Cameron is washing before walking out.

They wait in silence until they're sure he's gone.

JANE
He could change his mind.

CAMERON
He won't.

JANE
He could. And then we're fucked.

ADAM
If he does, we just don't tell him what's going on.

JANE
I think he might freak the fuck out when it's dark and we're not back at Promise.

CAMERON
Anything could happen. He could show up. Rick could decide that we're not allowed to go. Adam could break his leg on the way out the door. We made a good plan. Now we go through with it.

They go back to packing their lunches in silence.

JANE
I've spent almost all my life in captivity.

CAMERON
You'll be fine.

They finish packing and put everything away. On their way out, Jane speaks.

JANE
I'm not normal. I don't know how to be.. in the world.

Cameron grabs Jane by the shoulders and looks into her eyes.

CAMERON
Look at me.

Jane looks at her.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
Pull yourself together and stop being so fucking gay.

Jane laughs despite herself.

JANE
Ok.

They leave the kitchen, turning off the light on their way out.

INT. CAMERON & ERIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Erin puts lotion on her hands and elbows as Cam watches from under her sheets, very aware of the fact that it's their last night together.

ERIN
I'm going to turn the light off.

CAMERON
Okay.

Erin turns the light off and the room goes dark.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
Erin?

ERIN
Yeah?

Cameron thinks of what would be the right thing to say.

CAMERON
Goodnight.

ERIN
Night.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Jane, Cameron and Adam silently make themselves bowls of cereal and carry them into the dining hall.

INT. DINING HALL - CONTINUOUS

They enter the dining hall to find Rick, eating breakfast by himself. They freeze and he waves them over.

RICK
Early bird gets the worm, huh?

Adam laughs a little too hard.

ADAM
You know it!

Jane gives Cameron a look and Cameron ignores her. She sits down with Rick and they join her.

RICK
What are ya'll doing up so early?

CAMERON
We're going on a hike.

RICK
Oh yeah, I heard. Sounds fun.

They eat in silence.

CAMERON
How's it going, Rick?

RICK
Good. Real good. Just found out we'll be getting a new disciple. A young man from Indiana.
(to Adam)
Looks like you'll be getting a new roommate on Wednesday.

ADAM
(too enthusiastic)
Cool! Can't wait.

There's nothing left to say on the matter.

CAMERON
Seen any good films?

Rick cracks a smile.

RICK
I finally watched YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN on your recommendation. I haven't laughed that hard in a long time.

CAMERON
I thought you might like it.

RICK
I love that part with the elbow kiss, you know? “Not on the lips!”

He and Cameron rub their elbows together like they do in the film YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN.

CAMERON
My dad and I used to do that.

Rick smiles. Jane and Adam have already finished their cereal and are eager to go. Cameron catches up.

JANE
We should get going if we want to make our day.

RICK
You guys are serious hikers- I’m impressed. Maybe I’ll come next time.

ADAM
Definitely.

RICK
Have fun!

CAMERON
You too, Rick.

They leave Rick sitting at the table, eating his breakfast.

EXT. OUTSIDE - DAY

It’s sunny and bright- a good day for hiking. They walk away from God’s Promise.

EXT. WOODS - LATER

They walk through the woods in silence. Cameron stops at a clearing of land.

CAMERON
Here’s good.

Jane nods and starts building a tiny fire. Once she’s got it going, they all pull out their respective icebergs from their bags, place them into the fire and watch them burn.

JANE
I have presents.

She pulls two Polaroid pictures out of her bag and hands one to each of them. Cameron examines hers. It's the photo Jane took of her when she first arrived at Promise. Ruth's in the foreground and Cam's more in focus, wide-eyed and scared behind her. It makes her smile.

Adam throws his into the fire. He and his father stand in the lobby, both frowning at the lens. They watch it burn.

Cameron pockets her Polaroid.

EXT. WOODS - LATER

They finally reach the road and stop for a second. They look at each other. Stepping onto the concrete makes it real. Cameron takes the first step and there's no looking back.

EXT. BUS STOP - LATER

The bus pulls up and they step on.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

They pay for their tickets and take seats in an empty row in the back.

Silence. It's a bit like the last scene in THE GRADUATE. There's a feeling of "what the fuck do we do now?"

Adam stares out the window and hones in on a handsome James Dean type riding a motorcycle.

JANE
Say something to him.

ADAM
What kind of slut do you think I am?

JANE
Pull down your window.

ADAM
No!

Cameron does it for him. She sticks her head out.

CAMERON
MY FRIEND THINKS YOU'RE HOT.

ADAM
STOP IT!

Adam sticks his head out the window.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Hi!

POOR MAN'S JAMES DEAN
Hey.

Beat.

CAMERON
Quick, say something sexy!

ADAM
(to Poor Man's James Dean)
PULL MY FINGER.

They all laugh. It's a classic case of teens being obnoxious on the bus. A middle-aged couple looks annoyed. They clock it, try to pull themselves together.

JANE
(laughing so hard she can barely get the words out)
Pull my finger!

They keep laughing.

THE END